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NEWS RELEASE

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April 7, 2000

Contact: E. Edwin Eck, UM School of Law dean, (406) 243-4311.

UM RECEIVES \$750,000 TO SUPPORT COMPETITIVE STUDENT LAW TEAMS

MISSOULA —

The University of Montana School of Law has received its largest outright gift ever – \$750,000 – which will be used to support the school's seven competitive student teams. The gift was made by Billings attorney and 1974 UM law school graduate A. Clifford Edwards.

Edwards' gift, which creates the A. Clifford Edwards Advocacy Center Endowment, comes just weeks after UM's student moot court team won the national championship. Over the years the law school's academic teams have consistently performed well in regional, national and even international competition.

Edwards' endowment will provide a steady stream of funding for travel, resource materials, competition registrations and other expenses associated with fielding the UM teams. It also will support the school's Advanced Trial Advocacy course, which Edwards has helped teach on a volunteer basis since 1986, as well as fund annual guest lectures by distinguished judges and legal practitioners.

Earlier Edwards gifts made to the law school assisted the moot court team and helped modernize UM's Hoyt and Blewett Courtroom.

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Edwards' recent gift was announced at an April 7 luncheon, which also recognized law school volunteers and featured a presentation of the national-champion moot court team members: Taryn Stampfl Hart of **Eureka**, John Mudd of **Missoula** and Bobbi Frazer of **Plains** and **Billings**. The students discussed their experiences arguing fictional cases before some of the country's top legal figures. Law school Dean E. Edwin Eck acknowledged their impressive service at the luncheon.

In announcing the \$750,000 contribution, Eck said, "We certainly appreciate Cliff Edwards' generous gift. Thanks to Cliff and other Montanans who give time and financial resources, Montana's law school has been on the cutting edge of trial lawyer education for decades. With Cliff Edwards' latest gift, our future student competition teams will benefit from a permanent funding source for their team expenses. I am proud that a Montana alumnus, who has served so many Montana clients well, has set another example of philanthropy. Cliff Edwards and I strongly believe that a mix of theoretical and practical skills education is critical to prepare students for the practice of law. His gift ensures the future of that education at our law school."

Edwards received his undergraduate degree from Carroll College in Helena and is serving his second four-year term on its board of trustees.

The Montana Trial Lawyers Association named Edwards their Trial Lawyer of the Year in 1996. Since 1987 he has been listed in the national publication "The Best Lawyers in America." He also is a member of the American Board of Civil Trial Advocates and has been elected to memberships in several prestigious organizations, including the American College of

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Trial Lawyers and International Academy of Trial Lawyers. His Billings firm of Edwards, Tolstedt & Frickle specializes in representing Montanans in personal injury, products liability and denied insurance benefits litigation.

Edwards serves on boards of several civic and professional organizations, including the Farmers State Bank in Denton, where he was born and raised. His family members have owned and operated the Farmers State Bank there for more than 70 years. Edwards also owns and operates the Edwards Angus Ranch, which runs cattle in Fergus, Judith Basin and Petroleum counties.

Edwards and his late wife, Denise, have two sons who major in communication studies at UM. Chris is a junior, and John, a freshman, is a Grizzly football team quarterback.

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